

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

ARMY RESERVE PENTATHLETES: HOW DO WE BUILD THEM?

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ABSTRACT

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Today and for the foreseeable future, the Army Reserve as part of the one Army, Total Force concept deploys and operates throughout the world in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Frequently, Army Reserve Senior Leaders will lead and support all services—soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines including both Active and Reserve components. And even though strategic leadership meta-competencies are just as important today as they have been in the past, as a learning organization, the Army Reserve Leader must continue to adapt to the highly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment. Part of that adaptation is the development of the Pentathlete as a Strategic Leader in the Army Reserve. Although the Active and Reserve components share many of the same challenges in this development process, Army Reserve Leaders must face additional ones—a different environment consisting of less time and resources. So given these additional challenges, how will this development take place? This project examines changes that must occur in the Army Reserve if the development of the Pentathlete is to succeed. Recommendations will address those changes that need to occur and that will lead toward the development of the Army Reserve Pentathlete.

ARMY RESERVE PENTATHLETES: HOW DO WE BUILD THEM?

More than five years into the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) finds the strategic landscape continuing to change with a high probability of this change continuing well into the future. The operating environment can be characterized as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA). To meet this ever changing landscape the U.S. Army is changing from a Cold War construct of heavy forces to one of a lighter more agile construct. Soldiers (Active, Guard and Reserve) will remain at the forefront of a continuous, evolving conflict.¹ The complexity of this operational environment will require more of Army leaders at all levels.

To be more effective today and tomorrow, the Army is growing a new breed of leader—one more akin to a pentathlete.² In ancient times the term pentathlete was an athlete who competed in a number of different events and was considered among the most skilled athletes.³ The pentathlete was not necessarily considered the best athlete in any one event but was good enough to be competitive in enough events to be thought of as the best overall athlete.

In today's context, the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) General Schoomaker states in the 2006 Army Posture Statement "that the leaders of the future must be the equivalent of pentathletes—that is those leaders that are multi-tasked."⁴ The Chief of Staff goes on to state that the way ahead as laid out in the Army posture statement is ". . . we recognize that intellectual change precedes physical change. For this reason, we are developing qualities in our leaders, our people, and our forces to enable them to respond effectively to what they will face. We describe the leaders we are creating as "pentathletes," whose versatility and athleticism—qualities that reflect the essence of our Army—will enable them to learn and adapt in ambiguous situations in a constantly evolving environment. We have undertaken a major review of how we train, educate, assign, and develop our military and civilian leaders to ensure that our Soldiers are well-led and well-supported as they deal with complexity and uncertainty for the foreseeable future."⁵

The idea of a modern day pentathlete raises several questions: How inclusive is the CSA when determining the need for pentathletes? Is an Army Reserve Pentathlete part of this concept? If so, is there a difference between an Active and Reserve pentathlete? Are they built the same way? If not, then how is a Reserve Pentathlete built? All of these are important questions as the US Army Total Force: Active, National Guard and Army Reserve Forces prepares itself for the 21st Century and beyond. It is of interest that no mention of an Army Reserve pentathlete by the CSA or the Secretary of the Army exists. Perhaps it is because he makes no differentiation between an Army Reserve and Active Component pentathlete. This would make sense as the Army Reserve is a part of the total force. The competencies required

of an Active Component pentathlete should be the same for the Reserve Component pentathlete. What is not identical is the way in which a Reserve pentathlete will be built. The Army Reserve is faced with additional challenges in a different environment. To help set the context this study will introduce first the strategic leadership environment followed by an United States Army Reserve Overview including key definitions, a comparison and contrast of the Active component glide path to the pentathlete, its applicability to the Reserve Component, unique Army Reserve Challenges and finally recommendations.

Strategic Leadership Environment

Uncertainty is the defining characteristic of today's strategic environment. We can identify trends but cannot predict specific events with precision. While we work to avoid being surprised, we must posture ourselves to handle unanticipated problems—we must plan with surprise in mind.⁶ As the United States military continues its position as the world's lone military superpower, it is highly unlikely that any potential adversary will attempt a force on force engagement. Rather it is most likely that any adversary would adopt asymmetric methods when challenging the U.S. military. The 2005 National Defense Strategy identifies an “array of traditional, irregular, catastrophic, and disruptive capabilities and methods that threaten U.S. interests.”⁷ It is any one of these possibilities within the new security environment that the pentathlete will find himself working in and thus must be prepared for. See Figure 1.

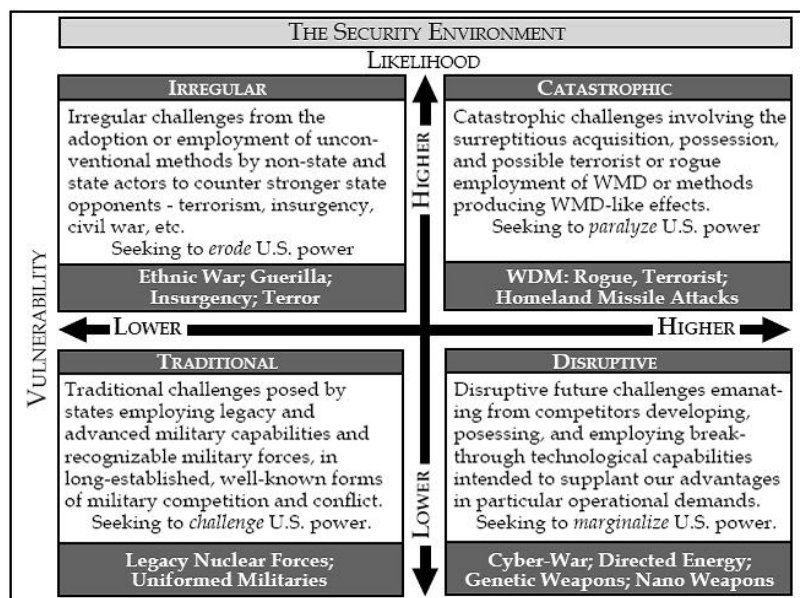


Figure 1.

Owen Jacobs in his book “Strategic Leadership: The Competitive Edge” further describes the strategic leadership environment as an external environment filled with Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, hence the acronym “VUCA.”⁸ He further suggests that it is virtually impossible to have complete knowledge about factors governing strategic decisions. Decisions must be made with incomplete understanding and with the associated risk that brings.⁹ It is this complexity of the 21st Century security environment that requires more of Army leaders at all levels. Tomorrow’s leaders will have to move along the range of military operations with equal ability, learning such complex tasks as how to shake hands with one hand while keeping the other near your weapon. Mastering this task is not easy and yet is so important in today’s environment. As witnessed today in operations underway in Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea, Europe, across the Americas, and in peace enforcement operations around the world, the actions and inactions of soldiers and leaders can have strategic consequences. To be effective today and tomorrow in these VUCA-like environments, the U.S. Army is growing a new breed of leader—one more akin to a pentathlete that is able to rapidly transition between complex tasks with relative ease. The future environment will demand that Army leaders at all levels be multi-skilled, innovative, agile, and versatile.¹⁰

To assist with this transformation, the Army is continuing to evolve our training and education systems to grow adaptive civilian and military leaders who are comfortable in leading during times of change and uncertainty.¹¹ Leaders that can communicate with people outside the Army, excel at creative problem solving, understand the thinking of others different than themselves, and handle the ambiguity and complexity of missions across the spectrum of conflict. See Figure 2.

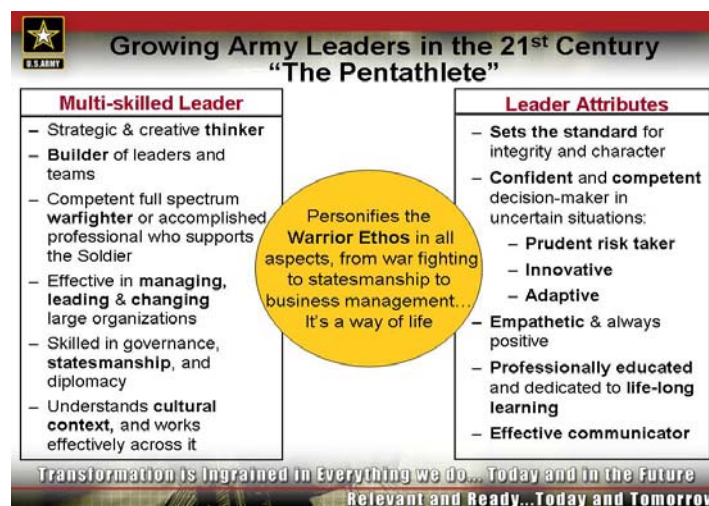


Figure 2.

This strategic leader environment will be fraught with challenges and conditions. The only future certainty is continued uncertainty and ambiguity.

Army Reserve Overview

It is important to understand the Army Reserve in order to better comprehend some of the unique challenges it faces. By law, the purpose of the Army Reserve is to “provide trained units and qualified persons available for active duty in the armed forces, in time of war or national emergency, and at such other times as the national security may require.”¹² The Army Reserve is an institution with a long tradition of adapting to the changing security needs of the nation. “The profound changes currently underway today, with more than 40,000 Army Reserve soldiers mobilized in support of the Global War on Terrorism are an accelerated continuation of that tradition.”¹³ “Since 1908 the Army Reserve, then called the Medical Reserve Corps, has been answering America’s call to arms: mobilizing over 89,000 for World War I, 57,000 for World War II, another 240,000 for the Korean War to 84,000 in Desert Shield / Storm to more than 147,000 today in support of the Global War on Terrorism.”¹⁴

Today’s role of the Army Reserve in providing trained and equipped units and personnel is little changed over the years. However, its role as a strategic resource base is changing. It was only a few years ago that the Army Reserve existed as a strategic reserve whose job it was to provide the Active Component force with trained and ready units in addition to individual augmentees capable of meeting global manning requirements. “Today the Army Reserve is transforming itself in support of the Active Component to a complementary operational force, an inactive-duty force that uses the energy and transformation and the operational demands of the Global War on Terrorism to change from a technically focused, force-in-reserve to a learning, adaptive organization that provides trained, ready, “inactive-duty” Soldiers poised and available for active service, as if they knew the hour and day they would be called.”¹⁵

Equally important as understanding the role and purpose of the Army Reserve is understanding the types of reservists that make up this operational force. “Reserve soldiers are members of the Reserve Component in one of several categories, each with unique requirements for peacetime participation in the Army and legal stipulations for federal mobilization.”¹⁶ This paper will focus only on the reservists as members of Troop Program Units (TPU), Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMA), and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). TPU soldiers conduct training, called battle assemblies, usually one weekend every month and an Annual Training, a two week event sometime during the training year. IMAs can fit into two separate sub-categories: either a drilling IMA (DIMA) or a traditional IMA. These soldiers

typically fill out an active component Table of Distribution and Allowance (TDA) and are available for mobilization with the active component unit. DIMAs perform battle assemblies like TPU soldiers and are eligible to perform an Annual Training. The more traditional IMA only performs an Annual Training. IRR soldiers normally do not have any yearly training requirement, no funded battle assemblies or Annual Training. However they are eligible to conduct training for retirement points only. Although not discussed in this paper another category of reservists is the Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) soldiers. They closely resemble the Active Component and are managed somewhat similarly.

Today's Army Reserve mission under Title 10 of the U.S. code, is to provide trained and ready Soldiers and units with the critical combat service support and combat support capabilities necessary to support national strategy during peacetime, contingencies and war. The Army Reserve is a key element in the Army multi-component unit force, training with Active and National Guard units to ensure all three components work as a fully integrated team.¹⁷

As the Active Component is transforming so is the Army Reserve. "It is simultaneously undergoing deep and profound changes in how it organizes, trains, mans, manages, mobilizes its soldiers and maintains its forces . . . committing to examining every process, policy, and program, and changing them to meet the needs of the 21st Century . . . all geared to one end—to make the United States Army Reserve a value added, integral part of the Army . . ."¹⁸ However, the Reserve Component will not transform independently from the Active Component but in conjunction with, in a full partnership. As part of this transformation the Active Component is building its pentathlete. It only makes sense to review the actions to date so that the Reserve Component can gain efficiencies from these efforts and apply where applicable. To better understand the challenges facing the Army Reserve it is worth looking at how the Active Component approaches building its pentathlete.

Active Component Glide Path

Today's security environment demands more from Army leaders than ever before. Army leaders must not only be able to lead Soldiers but also influence other people. They must be able to work with members of other Services and governmental agencies. They must win the cooperation of multinational partners, both military and civilian. But ultimately, the Army demands self-aware and adaptive leaders who can compel enemies to surrender in war and master the circumstances facing them in peace. "Victory and success depend on the effectiveness of these leaders' organizations."¹⁹ But is today's operational environment new? In their study, the Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study says it is not

stating that “it has evolved since 1989 with the fall of the Iron Curtain and breakup of the Warsaw Pact . . . that the Army has recognized for a decade the need to change to remain relevant to the strategic environment but left to its own devices, the Army has been slow to adapt.”²⁰

To build the Active Component pentathlete the Army will have to deal with some challenges. The first challenge is associated career path timelines. Currently, the Active Component career track is packed quite full with very little “white space.” Meese and Calkins state that “since there is no way to fit *more* already into tight career timelines, something must be sacrificed to achieve this goal.”²¹ They go on to recommend the additional time required for non-tactical assignments be created by accepting a slightly *less* trained and ready force. However, the tradeoff for this slightly trained and ready force will be a more adaptive and strategically effective force. “The Army may be technically less trained and less ready in force-on-force warfare, but the additional development in functional areas will better prepare officers for the variety of responsibilities that they will face in the future.”²² Another daunting challenge is in the assignments arena. The Review of Education, Training and Assignments for Leaders (RETAL) study recently concluded that still too much emphasis was being given to the operational assignments and that risk to an accepting officer might occur if an out of branch assignment was taken.²³ Another observation illustrates that still too much attention being shown to the kinetic vice non-kinetic domain. Meese and Calkin state in their study that the Active Component should consider returning to the Vietnam era Officer Professional Management System (OPMS). “It is during this time that the assignments system facilitated specialization outside an officer’s basic branch and so allowed a large percentage of officers to participate in graduate education or training with industry.”²⁴ This argument is reinforced by the RETAL study which revealed that the number of masters degrees earned outside of military funded institutions declined thereby leading to the conclusion that today’s general officers are not experiencing the benefits of a “broader” education.²⁵ This leads to education as a third challenge. The RETAL study further illustrates that the foundations for a kinetic education, combat operations, is doing well as evidenced by Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. The concern is on the non-kinetic side which deals more in the area of culture awareness, governance and mental agility. Although doctrine is trying to maintain currency with the volatile and complex environment it is a nearly impossible task. However, professional military education at the Basic, Intermediate and at the Senior Service schools is adapting the curriculum in order to provide more up to date information required for success on today’s battlefield.

Keeping these challenges in mind, how is the Active Component planning to build its Pentathlete? In order to meet the CSA's objective of developing the pentathlete, many initiatives and studies have commenced. Agile Leader Study, Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study (ATLDP), General Officer Leader Development, Quadrennial Defense Review Task Force Irregular Warfare Study are but a few of these examples seeking to transform senior leader development.

Another initiative the Active Component undertook in its pursuit to determine the best methods for developing the pentathlete was the Review of Education, Training and Assignments for Leaders (RETAL) study. "The RETAL Task Force is on a path to recommend issues for continuity and change so that the Army can best train, develop, and assign military and civilian leaders able to accomplish the missions required among the complexities and challenges of the 21st century national security environment."²⁶ Additionally, it was also tasked to:

- Identify requirements, based on SA and CSA vision, for a 21st century leader;
- Analyze existing Army policies and programs to identify voids, gaps, and redundancies;
- Recognize the successful elements of our current policies and programs to sustain;
- Recommend deletions, additions, and modifications to existing education, training, and assignment policies and programs to provide for an optimal developmental continuum; present recommendations for approval to the SA and CSA; and
- Culminate with integrating resource requirements for approved recommendations into the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System guidance.²⁷

After numerous interviews and consultations with both active and retired military and civilian leadership the RETAL Task Force review is now complete. Very broadly the review calls for broadening of competencies beyond those needed for warfighting. Specifically the TF recommendations for officers "call for adjusting the current leader development process that includes broadening the non-kinetic expertise, broaden to a full spectrum culture, and address gaps among the mental agility, cultural awareness, governance, and enterprise management/strategic leadership."²⁸

"The challenge will be to balance training, education, assignments, and mentoring that create successful small unit combat leaders who also have experiences that cultivate a broader range of skills in the long run. Thus, the management system for the next generation of leaders must combine the best components of previous systems while removing any bias, either explicit or perceived, against intellectual development."²⁹ Until the Army reaches a decision on its approach to building its pentathlete, an effort will continue to gather, analyze and evaluate all

data. Once the decision is made and implementation begins, the efforts to gather, analyze and evaluate will continue towards the end of creating the glide path that allows the building of the Army pentathlete. Figure 3 depicts a timeline indicating the insertion of proposed education and training opportunities that will help shape the building of the pentathlete culture.

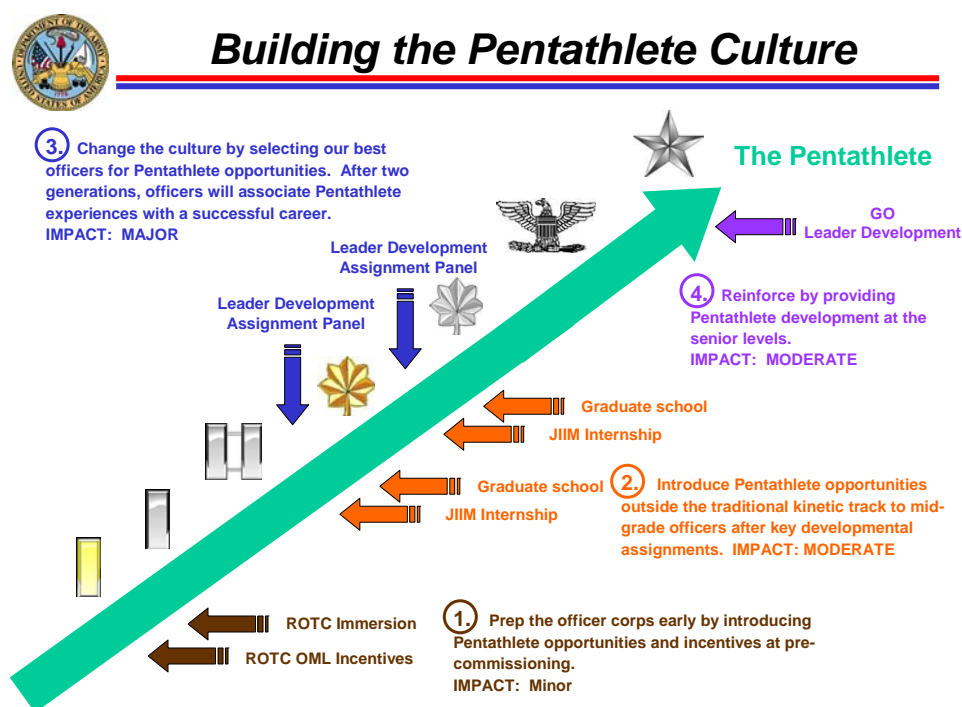


Figure 3.

Adapting the Army's current organizational culture is another challenge if the pentathlete is to be built. The term culture has many broad definitions. In his book "Leading Change" author John P. Kotter states that, "Culture refers to norms of behavior and shared values among a group of people . . . and regardless of level or location culture is important because it can powerfully influence human behavior, because it can be difficult to change, and because its near invisibility makes it hard to address directly."³⁰ Changing this Army culture will not be easy. In his monograph, Leonard Wong states that, "Cultural change will be difficult because the current culture appears to satisfy the needs of today's Army . . . yet the culture change is not for today's situation; it is for the future Army."³¹ Changing the Army's leadership and organizational culture to accept and reward those out of branch assignments will be a critical step in building the pentathlete.

Cultural awareness is another critical factor in building the pentathlete. The 2006 Army Posture statement further states that cultural awareness is "the ability to understand the how and why of foreign cultures, the roles that culture, religion, and geography have in military

operations. Foreign language capability extends beyond linguists, intelligence analysts, and interrogators to every Soldier and leader. It is an integral part of fostering a cultural awareness."³² Cultural awareness is also understanding your own institution, that of the government, interagency, and multi-national partners. Many studies have pointed out that if the pentathlete is to be built then the current Army Culture must change to accommodate it. The Army must be able to look and operate outside of its own institutions. It must be comfortable with other agencies, non-DOD civilians and the multitude of international and non-governmental organizations. The Army must also change its internal culture as well to accommodate pentathlete transformation. Changes being discussed include an incentive system that will encourage and not penalize officers for seeking positions outside of the "operational" career path, opportunities to obtain secondary specialties as well as educational experiences away from military funded institutions. Regarding personnel assignments, the ATLPD recommends that career management should focus more on growing leaders and providing quality educational and operational experiences rather than the time-driven, check-the-block career mapping.³³

To expand on the oft-quoted words of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, "As you know, you go to war with the Army you have. They're not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time."³⁴ "The military that goes to war today is a function of the training, education, and development of those individuals recruited over the past twenty years."³⁵ To meet today's and tomorrow's challenges an enlarged set of capabilities is needed.

Army Reserve Pentathlete

Now that we have looked at the Army's glide path to building the pentathlete, we must examine a question asked earlier: What is an Army Reserve Pentathlete and how do you build it? Before we address this, some general observations should be made up front. First of all, it is important that the Army Reserve build pentathletes as strategic leaders. Since September 2001, Army Reserve Leaders have found themselves deployed more frequently with a far greater mission set. It is no longer an anomaly that a Reserve General Officer might find himself/ herself responsible for a major portion of a campaign. For example, it was the commander of an Army Reserve Transportation Command that was selected by the Combined Forces Land Component Commander (CFLCC) to take charge of the Kuwaiti port of Ash Shu'aybah in the lead up to Operation Iraqi Freedom. This responsibility called for increased engagement with host nation government officials, local business leaders, and even United

Nations officials. The total force no longer has the luxury of hoping that the reserve force is trained and ready. It is simply expected to be.

Secondly, the reserve glide path towards building the pentathlete may differ from the Active Component glide path. Where and when the Army Reserve can take advantage of the Active Component and an associated glide path it should. However, due to fewer resources—namely time, opportunities and dollars—most Reserve Officers will have to use a different glide path. Finally, a major difference that must be noted is that for most Army Reserve Officers, their military career is second to their civilian career. All of these points will be further discussed in the following paragraphs.

What is an Army Reserve Pentathlete? It can be argued that an Army Reserve pentathlete is no different than an Active Component pentathlete; “a military leader who possesses a specific set of skills and leader attribute.”³⁶ However, most if not all the studies, research, and writing has focused only on the Active Component pentathlete. A few explanations might account for this. First, this might be due to the fact that the Army Reserve pentathlete will be built using similar glide paths and taking into account the same criteria as the Active Component. Or perhaps it is assumed that the Army Reserve does not need to have pentathletes as strategic leaders. Finally, the Active Component may be waiting to determine its path forward before assisting in the transformation and building of the Army Reserve pentathlete. However, the Army Reserve can not afford to be reactive in this transformational initiative. As the USAR is operational and deploying more now than ever before, and because it finds itself fully interchangeable with the AC in worldwide missions, it too must develop its version of the pentathlete. Is this a different version? Simply, no; it is the same and is just as important that, as the Army moves forward towards this endeavor, the United States Army Reserve must also move forward. The Army Reserve should take advantage of the efficiencies and empirical knowledge from the more resourced Active Component. However, the road to this pentathlete will face varying challenges.

Challenges

In building a Reserve Pentathlete, the Army Reserve will face some of the same challenges as the Active Component in addition to some reserve unique challenges. The Army Reserve Posture Statement postulates that one of these significant challenges to the Army Reserve institution will be the fundamental shift from a strategic reserve to an operational force. “Managing critical but limited resources to achieve higher readiness and continuing to recruit high-quality Soldiers, and sustaining a high optempo of operations are among the most

essential of these challenges.”³⁷ Moreover, like the Active Component, the Army Reserve will have to find the correct balance of education, training and assignments. Constructing the Army Reserve Pentathlete will be challenging but not insurmountable.

Educationally, Army Reserve officers must meet the same requirements that the Active Component officers do. Reserve Officers join the United States Army Reserve (USAR) either through a direct commission or after completing an active component requirement. Regardless, these officers should attend the same Officer Basic Course (OBC) and possibly a Captain’s Career Course (CCC). Army Reserve Officers must become branch qualified and go on to complete Intermediate Level Education (ILE) before promotional consideration to Lieutenant Colonel. ILE course standards are the same regardless who attends. However, a major difference is in the number of reserve officers selected to attend the resident course. Normally, reservists make up a small percentage of the total class population. The majority of reserve officers complete the ILE requirement by either correspondence or a combination of correspondence and attendance through a United States Army Reserve School. These school-like units, certified by Training and Doctrine Command, require attendance for a certain number of weekends, usually eight (8), or as many as forty (40) nights with a two week requirement which normally occurs during the summer months. This cycle goes on for two years with graduation after successful completion of a second summer two week period. It is not uncommon for active component officers to enroll and graduate from the reserve course after not being selected for the resident course. The issue is not that the curriculum is any different between the two means of professional education but the few opportunities for reserve officers to attend. It is hard not to fathom that a more thorough and complete education is obtained from the resident course as opposed to the non-resident course.

Another consideration that goes hand in hand with the educational difference is the differences in the time in grade requirements for promotion consideration. Since currently the Army Reserve promotion system does not have below-the-zone promotion consideration, normally the time in grade and time in service is much greater in the Army Reserve than in the active component. For example, seven years time in grade is required in the rank of Major before consideration to Lieutenant Colonel. Additionally, almost four years is required as a Lieutenant Colonel before promotion consideration to Colonel. Leveraged correctly, this may be an opportunity for the Army Reserve to use to its advantage.

Another challenge to the Army Reserves is the career management or assignment opportunities. Assignments in the USAR are normally restricted geographically. Because the first order for a reservist is their civilian career, most officers look for reserve employment in the

general area of where they plan to settle. This leads to many officers joining a unit and then “homesteading” or finding promotions within the unit. This practice, although still existing, is increasingly discouraged as it tends to stifle a broader exposure to different type units and Soldiers. But finding the next level assignment is not always easy. In today’s Reserve environment, officers may have to travel farther in order to accept promotions. Although the USAR tries to provide a pyramid that allows for upward mobility, it is impossible to do so in totality across branches and across the United States geographically. This leads to Soldiers needing to travel greater distances to attend battle assemblies, often over 100 miles.

Although career management does somewhat exist for AGR soldiers, currently Human Resources Command (HRC) is not manned or resourced to manage the careers of TPU, IMA or IRR soldiers. Therefore, they are left to their own means to find their next assignment. This raises the question of how then, under these business practices, are these officers to be developed and managed to ensure that they receive the correct assignments that will help them become the Army Reserve Strategic Leaders of tomorrow? The Army Reserve needs to better design success rather than leaving it to chance or accident.

Another similar challenge is the number of assignments available to reserve officers in the joint, interagency, multinational areas. Whereas the Active Component officers have assignment opportunities within the interagency and at multinational levels, these assignments are far and few between or simply do not exist. Therefore, for Reserve Officers it will be especially difficult to find a like-type assignment that will provide the breadth of global experience that is so necessary in this strategic environment.

Time is yet another challenge to the Army Reserve Officer in building the pentathlete. As previously mentioned, the reserve officer typically will spend one weekend a month and two weeks a year attending training as a minimum. This does not account for the numerous hours required for battle assembly preparation. The notion that presents itself is the way the reserve is currently structured and resourced for the conduct of training: is it enough? Is the equivalent of 38 days of training enough to meet the complexity and ambiguity of the 21st century strategic environment?

A final challenge worth mentioning is the limitation of training opportunities, both individual and unit. Individually, very few training opportunities exist that allow Reserve Officers to take advantage of. Moreover, even the few training opportunities available still have to answer the matter of resourcing, who pays, and the permission of the parent unit to agreeing to let the officer go to conduct the training. Unit training is usually conducted once a year, during the two week annual training period. This training is usually conducted locally and may or may not

involve the supported organization. Overall, outside the realm of traditional training, very few opportunities exist for either the soldier or the unit.

Most of these challenges, resources, training opportunities, assignments and education are broadly shared by the Active Component. However, the Army Reserve as an organization has challenges that go beyond those of the active component. Additionally, until the Army Reserve receives total funding to match its transformation requirements, these challenges will remain. But as mentioned earlier these challenges towards building the Army Reserve pentathlete are not insurmountable.

Recommendations

The Office of the Army Reserve (OCAR) has begun to address the need to create the Army Reserve pentathlete. “Already the Chief of the Army Reserve has created and operationalized the Senior Leader Training Program which focuses significantly at the on GO / Colonel-levels leader with seminars focused on organizational change, Army Transformation and ethics-based leadership and the Army Reserve Brigade and Battalion Pre-Command Course.”³⁸ Another Chief Army Reserve initiative is the creation of the Senior Leader Management Office. This recently created office is charged with identifying career paths needed by reserve officers aiming to reach the level of General Officer. Additionally, it will be charged with managing the careers of the graduates of the senior service colleges (SSC). Unless this initiative is expanded to both company and field grade officers, it will be over twenty years before SSC graduates are impacted by it. Is it presumed that previous job successes and career management (design) have led the graduate to SSC or was it more by chance? Additionally, it does not prescribe any methods or make recommendations on the types of assignments needed at the company grade and junior field grade levels. Ultimately, time will tell as to how successful this initiative will be.

As part of the transformation process to meet the CSA's intent of building the pentathlete, the active component is exploring possible ways, conducting many studies, and considering different initiatives to accomplish the task. The Army Reserve must find the proper balance of education, training and assignments transformation in order to meet the goal of building the Army Reserve pentathlete. Where it makes sense and it is applicable, the reserve component should leverage these initiatives. However, in many occurrences, an active component solution will not solve an Army Reserve issue.

The first recommendation in building the Reserve pentathlete is consideration for changing the reserve officer assignment process or the career path for the Army Reserve

officer. Throughout an Army Reserve career, an officer can select assignments from three separate reserve categories: troop program unit, individual ready reserve or the individual mobilization augmentation program. Of the three, a troop program unit assignment is among the most time intensive with a minimum requirement of a battle assembly one weekend per month and a two-week annual training per year. Current operations tempo may increase these requirements but will not decrease them. Moreover, an increase in rank and responsibility usually means a corresponding increase in time commitments. For consideration the Army Reserve should make better use of the IMA program and the IRR along the career glide path to enhance leadership development. When not assigned to a TPU, a soldier could become assigned as an IMA to an interagency organization, Department of Army G-section, or a combatant command. This assignment would give a much more strategic perspective to the USAR officer that he or she may not otherwise get. The time commitments are also a little less strenuous in these assignments. Additionally, the assignment to the IMA or IRR could afford the officer additional educational or training opportunities without increasing or experiencing any time constraints. Finally, the assignment to the IRR or IMA programs is not permanent. It could be used as a temporary pause to obtain additional education, training and exposure at a higher more strategic level; exposure to the strategic level that would be invaluable to the reserve officer and the Army Reserve as a whole.

Making corresponding changes to the Army Reserve education system is another recommendation. Educationally, the Army Reserve through its Army Reserve School Units meets the same requirements of the Active Component. Therefore, any changes made to the overall educational curriculum would be applicable to the Army Reserve.

Related to this would be to increase the number of school seats allotted to Army Reserve officers. Although the non-resident curriculum is the same as the resident course, it is hard to match the cross-fertilization and knowledge sharing that occurs in the resident course classroom. Allocating additional seats to reserve officers would help to grow the strategic bench of the Army Reserve and help give officers the necessary exposure to help them become the Reserve pentathletes of the future.

Another recommendation within the educational environment is a change to the time required for officer education completion. Expand the completion timeline, currently two years, to three years for completion of distance education schooling: ILE or SSC. This time expansion would allow the army reserve officer to receive additional academic instruction. For example, this additional year could be filled with interagency related instruction. Moreover, specialty functions like governance or possibly language or even regional or cultural education could be

included. These specialty courses are currently not offered anywhere and the applicable level of instruction could be presented at the appropriate level of schooling.

One concern frequently heard from non-resident students is the amount of work required to complete within the two year period. Balancing a civilian work week, family, reserve duty and additional school work can be burdensome. Spreading the course work over a greater period of time would reduce the course work over time.

To make the education experience relevant and current, every effort should be made to take returning veterans of OIF / OEF and use them as instructors at the Army Reserve schools. Deployment experience is crucial to transmit updated knowledge to the students.

An increase in the types of training opportunities is another recommendation to help build the Army Reserve pentathlete. One possible change might be to increase the number of training opportunities for reserve officers in the joint, interagency, multi-national arenas. This exposure would greatly increase the depth of knowledge and cultural awareness needed by today's and tomorrow's strategic leaders. Currently, these types of training opportunities either do not exist or are few and far in between. Some additional thought might be given to creating internships for mid-level reserve officers within the interagency, DA or at the joint staff levels.

Finally, the Army Reserve should continue to make use of the Distance Education system. Today's Army Reserve facilities are being built with current and future technologies, such as video telephonic conferencing, in mind. This capability can turn the facilities into classrooms with worldwide connectivity. With limited resources, the Army Reserve has leveraged this capability quite often and has become quite adept at getting a tremendous return for their limited investment.

Like the active component, these recommendations toward building the reserve pentathlete need to show positive results. They need to answer the questions of officers that will ask why they should risk their career. Incentive packages such as favorable assignment considerations, educational stipends, retirement points, promotions tied to assignments, or any combination of incentives tied to this glide path must be considered.

Conclusion

As the Army transforms to meet future requirements it must have strategic leaders that have multi-competencies: conceptual in that they understand and influence culture, understand joint and combined relationships, are politically and socially competent, can communicate effectively, and are skilled in negotiation and consensus building – a military pentathlete. The Army Reserve must also develop these same competencies in its leaders. Making this

endeavor more challenging is that this development will be done in an environment that is complex, volatile, ambiguous and uncertain. Moreover, these same competencies required for the Active Component are no different than for leaders of the Army Reserve. The difference is in how the Army Reserve pentathlete will be built. In many instances there is sufficient overlap between the two paths that the Army Reserve can use the Active Component path. However, in other cases an active component solution will not solve an Army Reserve issue. What the Army Reserve needs to do is begin taking the necessary steps toward building the Army Reserve Pentathlete. The Army Reserve needs to begin by looking at the kind of leaders it wants to have leading it into the future. Secondly, it must then develop career paths that will allow the Army Reserve's best and brightest to maneuver within the bands to complete this mixture of education and training. Additionally, the necessary resources must be made available along with an incentive mechanism that offers the appropriate level of rewards. Finally, the Army Reserve must continue leveraging its areas of expertise and utilizing its strengths to its advantage. If done, the Army Reserve will be well positioned to build the pentathletes needed to lead the reserve force in the volatile, ambiguous, complex and uncertain environment that lies ahead.

Endnotes

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